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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/600,861	06/19/2003	Hsiao Zhang Bill Wang	3801P039C2	6409

8791 7590 08/16/2004

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EXAMINER

LE, UYEN T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2171	

DATE MAILED: 08/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/600,861

Applicant(s)

WANG, HSIAOZHANG BILL

Examiner

Uyen T. Le

Art Unit

2171

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 13-16 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1-12 and 17-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 25 June 04 & 19 June 03
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101*

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-12, 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because they do not meet the utility requirement of 35 U.S.C. 101.

In the present application,

- “a network-based marketplace” at claims 1-6 does not belong to any statutory class
- claims 7-12 recite mere non-functional descriptive material
- claims 17-20 merely recite a process that could be performed using paper and pencil. For a process claim to pass muster, the recited process must somehow apply, involve use, or advance the technological arts.

Therefore, claims 1-12, 17-20 are directed to non-statutory subject matter because they lack usefulness and do not constitute a statutory manufacture, process, machine or composition of matter and are not within the technological arts.

Usefulness under the patent eligibility standard requires significant functionality to be present to satisfy the useful result aspect of the practical application requirement. See *Arrhythmia*, 958 F.2d at 1057, 22 USPQ2d at 1036. Merely claiming nonfunctional descriptive material stored in a computer-readable medium does not make the invention eligible for patenting. For example, a claim directed to a word processing file stored on a disk may satisfy the utility requirement of 35 U.S.C. 101 since the information stored

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may have some “real world” value. However, the mere fact that the claim may satisfy the utility requirement of 35 U.S.C. 101 does not mean that a useful result is achieved under the practical application requirement. The claimed invention as a whole must produce a “useful, concrete and tangible” result to have a practical application.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-12, 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention because

- it is not clear what applicant meant by “a network-based marketplace” at claims 1-12
- it is not clear what claim 17-20 accomplish.

Art rejection to claims 1-12, 17-20 is not applied because the limitations cannot be ascertained.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 13-16 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art of record does not disclose or make obvious retrieving requested listing by using an attribute value table, the attribute value table storing attribute values for a plurality of listings independent of the category to which each listing belongs, in combination with all the limitations recited in claim 13.

***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Gupta et al (US 5,826,258) teach a method and apparatus for structuring the querying and interpretation of semi-structured information.

Leal (US 6,189,003) teaches online business directory with predefined search template for facilitating the matching of buyers to qualified sellers.

Wada (US 2003/0011608) teaches image display method and portable terminal for displaying selected image.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Uyen T. Le whose telephone number is 703-305-4134. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Safet Metjahic can be reached on 703-308-1436. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

5 August 2004



**UYEN LE**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**